



Ofsted subject conference report: physical education

Developing more effective teaching and learning in physical education

**Better
education
and care**

Worcester, 14 June 2005

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Synopsis

The conference, hosted by the British Association of Advisers and Lecturers in Physical Education (BAALPE) and the Physical Education Association United Kingdom (PEA.UK) in partnership with Ofsted, took the form of a workshop for 115 physical educators, including advanced skills teachers, lead practitioners from local education authorities (LEAs), initial teacher training providers and representatives from the Youth Sport Trust, the Department for Education and Skills (DfES) and the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA). The conference sought to build on the work of previous Ofsted conferences by reviewing evidence and moderating judgements on teaching and learning. The two key themes were (a) using the new inspection criteria for judging the quality of teaching and learning; (b) that activity does not always mean learning.

Summaries of seminar sessions

The current state of play in physical education

Carole Raymond, HMI, Ofsted Specialist Adviser for Physical Education

The Ofsted physical education (PE) subject reports 2005 (www.ofsted.gov.uk) illustrate inspection data collected in 2004/05. They provide evidence of general improvements in the subject across both phases of education. For example:

There has been a steady growth in the number of pupils taking GCSE and other accreditation awards, and standards have continued to rise.

Pupils' achievements are improving steadily, most notably their ability to observe and evaluate performance.

Assessment remains one of the weakest areas of PE teaching.

Despite improvements in the range of curriculum activities available to pupils, the planned structure of PE into short units of work – often taught in discrete areas of activity – militates against continuity and progression.

Out-of-hours provision is good in the majority of schools.

Leadership and management are generally good; evaluation remains an area of weakness.

Poor accommodation continues to inhibit standards of achievement in PE in one quarter of secondary schools and one tenth of primary schools.

- The majority of pupils continue to be overwhelmingly enthusiastic about PE and their behaviour and attitudes are mostly good or better, but poor levels of fitness remains an issue.

There have been improvements in the quality of initial teacher training courses, and inspection evidence recognises that the many improvements in physical education have only come about because of the commitment and hard work of advisers, teachers, partnership development managers and all others contributing to the work of schools.

As in previous years, physical education also continues to benefit from the range of initiatives linked to the Physical Education, School Sport and Club Links Strategy. Despite this, however, data collected during the piloting of the new subject inspection framework highlighted there is still much to do if we are to achieve the target of two hours high-quality provision for all pupils.

An important change in the new subject inspection framework is the initial discussion of the school's self-evaluation of physical education. This will provide the school with an opportunity to say what it thinks about the quality of physical education and provide a basis for a thorough discussion during, and at the end of, the visit. A more detailed review of the subject inspection process and four-point grading scale can be found on the Ofsted website, www.ofsted.gov.uk

Using inspection criteria to judge the quality of teaching and learning

Carole Raymond, HMI, Ofsted Specialist Adviser for Physical Education

This session outlined the new inspection criteria for judging the quality of teaching and learning. In small groups, delegates observed two different teaching episodes and discussed the evidence. The tasks led to some informed discussions about the characteristics of a 'good' and 'very good' lesson. It quickly became evident that a 'best fit' judgement applies and that a well organised lesson with lots of activity does not mean that the majority of learners make progress.

"We all need to challenge the misconceptions that 'activity means achievement' and 'doing more is doing better' if the majority of learners are to have access to high-quality provision in physical education."

There was general agreement that the following are key features of good teaching in physical education:

teaching methods that balance the greatest participation with good intervention by the teacher to introduce new ideas, more advanced work, or elements of practice to improve particular skills

tasks that challenge learners physically as well as requiring them to think, to contribute their own ideas, make decisions and evaluate their own and others' work

assessments that are used to plan new work

questioning that prompts new lines of exploration and challenges learners' knowledge and understanding

- time used very productively, ensuring a good balance of teacher-led and independent and collaborative work.

The new subject inspection programme

Carole Raymond, HMI, Ofsted Specialist Adviser for Physical Education

This session examined developments in the new subject inspection programme and the key changes commencing in September 2005 (see www.ofsted.gov.uk). Question and answer time enabled delegates to raise their own concerns and to seek clarification on the new inspection framework. Individual enquiries can be sent to: carole.raymond@ofsted.gov.uk

The Physical Education, School Sport and Club Links Strategy: a briefing on the national professional development work strand

Sue Campbell, Government Adviser for Sport

This session focused on the professional development work strand and provided an opportunity for lead trainers to raise questions and concerns. It addressed the changes that are planned to the current lead trainer training and local tutor support process. The new delivery model and processes are designed to ensure there is a consistent mechanism for training local tutors in delivery of all areas within the national programme, and aims to give greater flexibility for delivery at a local level.

Next steps

- Details of the workshop, including examples of good practice and outcomes of discussions will be made available to delegates and a wider audience on request.
- Delegates will disseminate seminar findings through their own networks.
- Subject associations will develop exemplars of good and very good lessons on video/DVD to help teachers and others to clarify the best practice and to moderate the accuracy of their judgements.
- Specialist professional development needs to focus on helping teachers to maintain up-to-date subject knowledge, sharing good practice and developing subject specific pedagogy.

Further information

For further information see the following websites.

www.teachernet.gov.uk/pe

www.baalpe.org

www.youthsporttrust.org

www.pea.uk.com

www.1st4sport.com

The following reports are available from www.ofsted.gov.uk:

The physical education, school sport and club links strategy (HMI 2397), Ofsted, 2005.

Outdoor education: aspects of good practice (HMI 2151), Ofsted, 2004.

Provision for gifted and talented pupils in physical education 2003–04 (HMI 2149), Ofsted, 2004.

The school sport co-ordinator partnership programme: evaluation of phases 3 and 4 2003–04 (HMI 2150), Ofsted, 2004.

Primary subject reports 2002–03: physical education (HMI 2000), Ofsted, 2004.

ICT in schools; the impact of government initiatives; secondary physical education (HMI 2150) Ofsted, 2004.

Secondary subjects reports 2002–03: physical education (HMI 1988), Ofsted, 2004.

The school sport co-ordinator programme: evaluation of phases 1 and 2 2001–03 (HMI 1586) Ofsted, 2003.

Good assessment practice in physical education (HMI 1481), Ofsted, 2003.

Good teaching, effective departments (HMI 337) Ofsted, 2002.

Primary subjects reports 2000–01: physical education (HMI 365), Ofsted, 2002.

Secondary subjects reports 2000–01: physical education (HMI 381), Ofsted, 2002.